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ABSTRACT

Attitudes and socioeconomic conditions of adolescents and young people in the Federal Republic of Germany are explored in this review of research on views about the future, social protest, unemployment, trainee jobs, the situation of girls, and alternative life styles. Research suggests that young people, while perceiving threats to the environment, for example, are ready to undertake a commitment to the future. Several studies since 1980 suggest that this conscious social-political attitude is not always directed toward established political parties. Many favor political demonstrations, less than half favor the occupation of factories, and a few support violent actions. Further, the proportion of young people skeptical about technology has increased since 1979. Because statistics reveal that not only are there many young people in need of training and study positions, but also that those who have completed training cannot find employment, both the public and private sectors have initiated innovative projects. A survey conducted by a women's magazine suggests that the main concern of young girls is getting the job they want, a concern which is justified since unemployment is higher for women than for men of the same age. The same study also reveals that young women are strongly committed to the peace movement and that they have no aggressive attitudes towards adults. Finally, the alternative life styles, such as joint-living communities, reflect an attempt to make a reality of new forms of living and working. (KC)

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Special Report

Revolt or Retreat ?

- The protest of youth and the situation of young people in Federal Republic of Germany -

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by
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Introduction

For some time the words "Youth protest" have been continually appearing in the media of the Federal Republic of Germany. The talk is all about a "protesting" youth, a "rebellious" youth or a youth that is "opting out." A whole row of studies and investigations have been made into the behaviour of young people. But the concern of some sociologists in view of the "No future" slogan scrawled on house walls is not shared by Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl. In an interview with the weekly paper "Rheinischer Merkur/ Christ und Welt" the Chancellor said: "The great majority of young people are fine and perfectly all right. It is a first-class generation."

An analysis of the behaviour and the views of youth in the Federal Republic of Germany has been prepared by the Federal parliamentary enquiry commission into "Youth protest in the democratic state." The result of the investigation is to be discussed in a debate in the Federal parliament in the early summer of 1983. The commission was appointed in May, 1981 to analyse the "origins, forms and aims of the protest of young people." In addition it was to work out "possibilities for improving understanding between the generations and between youth and the political representatives."

At the end of 1980 the Federal Republic had about 61.7 million inhabitants. Of these 4.6 million did not possess German citizenship (source: Social Data 1982 published by the Press and Information Office of the Federal government). The proportion of the population under 15 years of age was 35.8 per cent. About 1.2 million foreign young people live in the Federal Republic. 2.25 million girls are between 15 and 19 years old.

I. Thoughts about the future

"As I see the future the world will be over-populated and we will have permanent communications with the moon, perhaps even with Mars. The earth will then only be a dirty ball in the hands of the men playing with it. Maybe the earth will

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disappear completely because some time there must be a new start when we begin as primitives all over again as we did million of years ago." (Udo, 16 years old, school pupil).

"The world should be a jollier place, not thinking about wars any more and not producing force. I would like a world without any cares, all bright and clear without rubbish heaps everywhere and clouds of smoke in the sky, and not a world contaminated with radioactivity and without life." (Kerstin, 16 years old, grammar school pupil).

"There is still one consolation however. As long as man can remember people have always from time to time prophesied catastrophes and the end of the world. Yet our dear old earth is still in existence to date and the world population has constantly increased. I am sure ways will still be found in the future." (Jost, 13 years old, grammar school pupil).

"When I think of other people and those who are nearest or the family, what I miss is the verbal contact. This does not mean of course that people no longer speak to each other. They speak to each other but they often talk past each other. They play a part and hide their true face behind a mask. This is a generalisation on purpose. Just the same I hope that people in future will find more contact and be more interested in others." (Monika, 16 years old, grammar school pupil).

These are statements by boy and girl school pupils in the Federal Republic of Germany when asked how they view the future. The educator, Dieter Bossmann collected them a long time before the Federal parliamentary enquiry commission "Youth protest in the democratic state" was appointed. Dieter Bossmann has put together essays written between 1977 and 1980 by boy and girl school pupils aged between 10 and 20. The question "How I imagine the (my) future" was answered by pupils at ordinary schools as well as grammar schools, modern schools, special schools and comprehensive schools. 2,500 young people from the Federal Republic and Berlin (West) took part in the scheme. They wrote about the jobs they would like, about their ideas of love, marriage and family, their thoughts about age and death and their hopes and fears for the future.

Bossmann did not claim that this collection of essays was a representative report on the state of youth in the Federal Republic of Germany. But he expressed the hope that "the volume of the material presented would give youth workers, teachers, parents, educators, churchmen etc., as well as political representatives a more intimate knowledge in order to facilitate a dialogue between the generations." A dialogue which - not only in the opinion of the pedagogue Bossmann - is urgently required.

The essays - which incidentally were all written in school and not marked - reveal a clearer picture of the way youth thinks than many studies and investigations carried out in recent years. It is no naive generation that is growing up. The boys and girls express themselves very clearly and articulate their worries about not being able to find the job they would like because of unemployment and the shortage of trainee jobs. And they speak just as plainly about their fears of environmental destruction and the possibility of a new war. "The future of the earth," writes the 15-year old grammar school boy, Lars, "looks anything but good. "Hopefully there will be some personalities in the future who will prevent all the fatally gloomy prophecies from coming true."

This accent of hope is the general tenor of the collection of essays. Despite their fears about the unreasonableness of mankind and their reservations about the actions of politicians these young people are not resigned.

Similar tones were noted by the author, Roswitha Froehlich in conversations with girls and women between 16 and 26 years of age. Nina, 16 years old, told her: "I have just had a dream that bombs were falling. And I was frightened. But I only get frightened when I think about it. It is not so great that I just sit there and wait. I know what I want to do, I have an aim in sight. " And Anna, 17, a commercial trainee, said: "The punks for example, they have the attitude - the world is bad. That is understandable and I accept it. But they don't offer any solution how they would do things differently. They don't want any solution and that is very bad."

Young people, who are so often accused of being emotional and lacking a sense of realities, think more realistically than many adults believe. They dream, it is true, of a perfect world

but they know that their environment is anything but perfect. Most of them believe that chemicals and technology are threatening the environment if not actually destroying it. But they have no intention of accepting this development lying down. They are ready to undertake a commitment for the sake of a better future. And their ideal is not the man with the "shooting iron" who is ready to use force if necessary to push through his ideas of what is right. The environmentalists of Greenpeace represent their ideal. As the 17-year old handicapped person Piri expressed it in conversation with the journalist Roswitha Froehlich: "Speaking personally I would not exclude that I would hit back if someone attacked me at a demo. I am no saint. But I hope that I would not really do it. In principle in any case pacifism is the only thing that I can recognise. The rainbow fighters of Greenpeace need more courage than a Che Guevarra who could hide himself behind his gun."

Young people in 1983 have others ideas about their future than their parents had at their age. This leads to a difference in the views of the generations which was not the case in the 50s and 60s. A comparative study "Integration readiness of youth in the process of social change 1962 - 1982" has been carried out by the Professor of Sociology Klaus R. Allerbeck (Faculty of Social Science at the University of Frankfurt-on-Main) together with Dr. Wendy Hoag. They interviewed 2,000 young people between the ages of 15 and 18 as well as their parents. The questioning which took place in the Federal Republic of Germany and was supported financially by the Volkswagen Works Foundation, was aimed at obtaining political views and attitudes to life. This investigation which is not yet concluded, is a repetition of a similar one carried out in 1962.

The results are surprising. Never before has there been such a big difference in the ideas of the generations as today. In 1962 there was fairly wide-reaching agreement between a 20-year old and his parents in politics - even if there were conflicts between the generations in other aspects of their joint life. Today's 20-year old usually has political views completely at variance from those of his parents though they often have a very harmonious relationship with their parents.

This does not point to a "no future" generation which is indifferent about everything. On the contrary it suggests a generation which does not see its future at all in a rosy light but rather like a light at the end of the tunnel - but which is ready to do a great deal for this light. As the 18-year old Sabine told her questioner, Roswitha Froehlich: "I believe whoever understands what is happening can no longer afford to dream. Yet I would like to do something. I don't want to say I'm going to live my own life. I say to myself do something, perhaps you can prevent something. And I want to have this little bit of life and for that I will fight."

II. In search of a dialogue

"In Berlin-Kreuzberg in December, 1980 after the barricades went up in flames, supermarkets were plundered and police units were beaten into flight, the politicians in their helplessness remembered the patent recipe for such cases - in May, 1981 a Youth Commission was established by the Federal parliament." This was the ironic commentary of the Hamburg paper, Die Zeit, in February, 1983. Indeed there have seldom been so many studies, investigations and analyses about youth as in this still fresh eighth decade of the century. Politicians and party officials have set out in search of a "dialogue with young people." Ist youth tired of political parties? Is it really so radical as the TV pictures of youths throwing stones in Berlin (West) would make one believe? Federal Chancellor Helmut Kohl at least maintains an optimistic view. In his opinion it is only a very small minority which has a negative attitude to the state. "Their loud voices attract public attention out of all proportion," he said regretfully in an interview.

Federal President Karl Carstens has a similar view of the attitude of youth. In a talk with the Information service of the Evangelical Alliance he said the greater part of the younger generation has a positive commitment - whether in church, social or charitable organisations. The overwhelming majority of youth, Carstens said, is in the position to give purpose to its life.

However this conscious social-political attitude is not always directed towards the established political parties. In July, 1970

the voting age in the Federal Republic of Germany was lowered to 18 (before it had been 21). On January 1, 1975, the age of majority, which until then had been 21, was also lowered to 18. This was in line with the constitutional article 38, paragraph 2: "Enfranchised are all who have reached their 18th. year; eligible for election are those who have reached the age of majority." Young voters were responsible in a large measure for the "Greens" getting into the Federal parliament in march, 1983.

Supporters of the "Greens" regard active public demonstrations as a political necessity. This emerges from a study made by the "Infratest-Social research" and commissioned in 1982 by the Federal Minister for Youth, Families and Health. The purpose was to investigate the pattern of motivation of youth and young adults. 2,012 persons aged between 15 and 30 were questioned. From their answers it appeared that 45 per cent of young people in the Federal Republic regard authorised demonstrations as a suitable method of advancing political interests. Among those questioned 61 per cent of the "Greens" were in favour and of these 31 per cent regarded spontaneous public demonstrations in individual cases as necessary. For comparison: of the young people questioned, only six per cent of those who supported the CDU/CSU were in favour of spontaneous demonstrations; among SPD supporters it was nine per cent.

Of those questioned by Infratest, 69 per cent were in favour of citizen initiative and self-help groups, 67 per cent advocated active work in trades unions, works and personnel councils while 57 per cent thought that membership of a political party could be useful for advancing their political interests. Most of them believed that collecting signatures on petitions was politically effective. Participation in elections as a means of advancing political interests was accepted by 81 per cent of those questioned. This corresponded with the facts. At the last Federal parliamentary elections 5,274,000 young voters between 18 and 25 were eligible to vote and of these 79.6 per cent did actually vote.

Those questioned by Infratest did not completely exclude violence. Three per cent did not condemn actions involving force if some political end was thereby achieved. Fifteen per cent took a positive view of house squatting.

The "Frankfurter Rundschau" commented on March 15, 1983: "With the increase in the level of education the numbers increase of those who regard house occupation and violent actions as suitable instruments for attaining political ends. Among the students and young people who have been to a university 12 per cent are in favour of violent actions and even 34 per cent for the occupation of houses and factories."

Rockers, punks and right-wing extremists are completely rejected. Forty six per cent said they were also opposed to youth sects. Nine per cent work in church youth groups. Sympathy with "Amnesty International" was expressed by 66 per cent, the environmentalists are even more popular; 64 per cent sympathise with the peace movement (in which only 11 per cent are active however).

In January, 1983, the Deutsche Shell AG presented a supplement to the Shell study "Youth '81". The supplementary study bore the title "Approach attempts Youth '81" and was based on a poll of 1,077 persons between 15 and 24 years of age. One of the authors of this study, Professor Juergen Zinnecker investigated the significance of the emblems and stickers favoured by young people in the Federal Republic of Germany. The wearing of badges often begins when children are eight. The Marburg Sociologist defined the pictures and slogans as recognition signals among a certain age group and a provocation for adults. Zinnecker also believes that a badge makes it easier for young people to get into the world of politics. This way of expressing an opinion does not carry with it the danger of being involved in discussions and being driven into a corner. The professor says the posters and badges of young people are "approach attempts" to get into a world that is closed to them.

Politicians and social scientists have increased their efforts recently to seek a dialogue with youth. The Giessen psychotherapeut Horst-Eberhard Richter wrote in the magazine, "Psyche" in January, 1983: "The protest generation of youth has has started a polarisation process or is at least the result of one. On the one side are these young people who are categorically demanding first of all a new ecological policy and another way of preserving peace. Opposed to them are a majority of established older people who see in this protest scene the

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main danger for the maintenance of prosperity and security and finally of the established order itself. But the forcefulness with which the irritated elders reactshows how deeply affected they are. Do they feel themselves endangered because the excited youngsters are exhibiting what they themselves are with difficulty repressing?" And the scientists sums up: "But even if we elders discover that this critical youth reflects only one of the aspects of our world that we have suppressed, the question still remains how shall we deal with it."

The question is not only important for parents and educators. The "Psydata" Institute for Market Analysis, Social and Media Research in Frankfurt-on-Main, commissioned by Deutsche Shell AG, has found out that 76 per cent of the young generation fears destruction of the environment by chemicals and technology. At the time of the investigation (1981) most of them also feared there would be an imminent economic crisis.

The authors of the Shell study 1980 concluded from their questioning that young pessimists sympathised with house squatters and atomic power opponents whereas optimistic young people were more interested in football or were motor cycle fans. Scientists today speak of a "young-centred" circle which has no time for established parties, has difficulties with grown-ups and mistrusts authority. This section of youth orientates itself politically - according to the authors of the Shell study of 1981 - by a majority with the "Greens" and the Alternative movement. The other section of youth is described by the authors as "adult-centred." These young people seek personal contact with adults, believe in law and order and take an optimistic view of the future.

Fifty seven per cent of the persons questioned in the Shell study "Youth '81" say that people today are totally controlled by computer. The proportion of sceptical young people has increased in recent years. In 1979 the Munich Institute for Youth Research investigated 17-29 year olds to discover what their fears were. Already at that time 35 per cent of those questioned believed that technical progress would destroy our life.

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In view of this development the German Federal parliament decided in May, 1981, to appoint the Commission of Enquiry "Youth protest in the democratic State." In February, 1983 its final report was presented. The politicians want to examine the contents thoroughly. Member of parliament Matthias Wissmann, chairman of the Commission, took the view that the discussion that had been started should be continued.

The Enquiry Commission has already pointed out the need for certain changes. Among these are official encouragement of self-help actions, new forms of home building or the development of technology friendly to the environment. In their recommendations they say: "Biodynamic methods of cultivation should be better researched and given greater encouragement." Or "In industrial production the emission of by-products into the atmosphere should be continually reduced by all possible means such as substitution, different production processes or better filters. In the fight against atmospheric pollution the construction of smaller de-dentralised power stations with heat-power coupling is recommended."

The Bremen Social and Youth Senator Henning Scherf, chairman of the conference of Youth Ministers in the Federal Laender (States) has demanded that the report "should not be allowed to disappear in the drawers." He added that he wished the politicians would convert their "perplexity into forceful action." This will require a re-thinking process on the part of many local political representatives.

The report makes clear how explosive the situation is. It states: "A significant number of young people, among them many children of foreigners, have hardly any chance in our society today of developing a really promising future. This group is fortunately still relatively small but it will grow if the economic difficulties increase and with them the unemployment among youth. In the long run this could lead to the formation of a numerically significant youthful sub-proletariat, which, because it has nothing to lose and by normal means nothing to win either, could become a breeding ground for violence and crime an a sump of right and left wing extremist groups. A sharpening of the situation would lead, as far as can be seen, to more and more young people who have committed themselves to protest and come into conflict with the authority of the state, being driven into isolation.

Unemployed youth without a future offer a growing protest potential. The commission therefore demands in its final report that the number of training places available in the public services be increased and that industry should train more skilled workers than are actually needed at the time.

III. Unemployment and its problems

The youth protest in the Federal Republic of Germany was not precipitated by the unemployment among young people. But unemployment among youth can strengthen the potential for aggressiveness among youth who start fights, for instance, at football matches in order to "let off steam." "Increasing unemployment and an ever growing shortage of training places in certain vocational areas compared with the demand, cuts out one section of youth from social participation and recognition even before they start a career and damages the self-respect of a whole young generation. Unemployment means for young people that their independence is endangered and they get the feeling that they are not needed," says the final report of the commission of enquiry "Youth protest in the democratic state."

On New Year's day, 1983 more than 200,000 young people under 20 years of age were unemployed in the Federal Republic. If no more trainee jobs are created then this year, according to the calculations of the German Trade Union Federation (DGB) there will be 270,000 unemployed young people. The German Trade Union Federation has therefore demanded the provision of additional training places in the public service. According to the trade unions in 1983 about 1,674 million young people in the Federal Republic have to be supplied with places for study and training in schools and works. But there are places for only 1.4 million school-leavers.

The biggest problem however, are not the many young people without training places but those who have completed their vocational training and are ready to start work but cannot find a steady job. The employment offices are also worried about the young foreigners. Fifty-six per cent of all young foreigners in the Federal Republic of Germany aged between 15 and 18 are not attending a general or a vocational school. In 1981 only 16 per cent of them had a training post in a firm - that was about 46,000 out of 291,000.

About 14 per cent were attending a part-time vocational school without any works training, only three per cent (about 9,000 young people) were registered at general schools for further education and 11 per cent (about 33,000) were attending vocational fulltime schools.

Young foreigners are particularly handicapped in looking for trainee jobs - this fact was noted in the report of the commission of enquiry "Youth protest in the democratic state." And even when they have found one there are difficulties very often, particularly in the case of girls. The Institute of German Industry (IW) confirmed in January, 1983 that the number of young people who break off their vocational training without completing it is on the increase. In this group are particularly many girls and boys who have not properly completed their basic school education. In the opinion of the Institute of German Industry these drop-outs are blocking 40,000 training places because their successors in the places they vacate can only be taken on in the next educational year.

"Nothing going on downtown - Kids destroy a telephone - under the direction of aggression - for they have nothing to do - nothing going on downtown." These are the words of a song in the "New German Wave." Roughly since 1979 there are more and more German rock groups writing lyrics of this kind. They express plainly enough the feelings of many unemployed young people.

IV. Trainee jobs - projects

The Federal government reckons that the situation on the trainee-job front will be tight for several years. In 1983 it is expected that there will be 655,000 applicants for works training. And this number, so it is said, will not change much over the next few years. Many new applicants do not want to start an apprenticeship immediately after leaving school but go at first to attend a vocational training school or take some other preparatory course.

More and more people in responsible positions are evolving new ideas for solving the unemployment problem. One public official in a rural area has written to 1,500 local firms urging them to offer trainee jobs to all young people who want one.

Hamburg gave a guarantee in autumn, 1982, that every young Hamburger who was seeking a trainee job by Spring of the following year, would receive an offer before February. The City council voted 34 million DM for this programme. New training facilities for 1,097 youngsters were created outside industrial firms. In February a trainee contract was received by 751 Hamburg school-leavers though 305 did not accept the offer. In the meantime 40 had started university studies or had prolonged their schooling. The Hamburg initiative is seen as a model for others.

Everywhere in the Federal Republic of Germany efforts are being made to create additional training places. Already in April, 1982 the Berlin Senate had voted 165 million DM for this purpose. The money will finance a special programme up to 1986.

Private initiative can also help. A good example is the Bonn Association for Aiding the Endangered which directs its efforts at helping unemployed young people in especially difficult social conditions. Their work has been supported from the start by a protestant church charity in Stuttgart. The regional association of North-Rhine Westphalia is also helping. The Bonn association has erected a workshop on an old car dump and is training automobile fitters there. Twenty mechanics are now working there and the workshop is run by two master mechanics, four trained mechanics and two social educational experts. The trainees all had difficulties in integrating themselves into society. Some had drug problems and others difficulties with alcohol.

The success of the Bonn association justifies the faith of its initiators. In order to give work to more young people a second used car dump is being converted in the same way as the first. In addition the association owns a carpenter's shop where nine young people are working, of whom six are undergoing an apprenticeship.

How does one enable young people who come from difficult social conditions to discover new prospects? How can one encourage them to start an apprenticeship and see it through? And where does one find a training place for them? The Bremen Youth Office and the Bremen Youth Senator Henning Scherf had an idea.

They spoke to the engineer Adolf Schubert and persuaded him to run his mechanical workshop as a training place under the wing, so to speak, of the Youth Senator. The news magazine, Der Spiegel reported in December, 1982, that Mr. Schubert had signed a contract to "train exclusively young people selected and sent to him by the Youth office of Bremen." And the Senator for Social affirs, Youth and Sport, Henning Scherf contracted to pay "a care-rate that would cover the costs." Fourteen young people are now being trained by Schubert as mechanical engineers. As half of them had not completed their schooling properly and had run into difficulties in the vocational school theoretical instruction occupies a high place on Schubert's training schedule. And he has discovered that the youngsters enjoy the work. In Bremen they are now considering whether this experiment can serve as a model for similar arrangements with other firms. With firms, for instance, which might otherwise have to close down for lack of orders. This idea would be a help in many ways.

In Berlin (West) they found another way of helping youngsters from socially difficult backgrounds to obtain training and work. In that city "Kreuzwerk" has been brought into existence. This is the "Association for encouraging self-help in urban renovation and vocational training." Fort-eight youngsters, girls as well as boys, are learning here. In addition "Kreuzwerk" is a test prototype means of racial integration. The social workers and skilled craftsmen who have come together to help young people, are dealing with Germans and Turks at the same time. "Kreuzwerk" is primarily an undertaking that restores homes and houses and receives for that work public funds from the city's governing body, the Senate. On four floors of an old factory in Kreuzberg training workshops have been fitted out. And the 48 apprentices who learn such trades as tiler, housepainter, heating engineer, work on renovating the houses where they are themselves going to live. This idea solves two problems at the same time - young people learn a trade and find a home. The young people selected for this trial in summer, 1982, from 150 applicants, are taking the opportunity seriously. They themselves have made the rules. Anyone who absents himself several times without excuse, is expelled.

"Kreuzwerk" is financed by Berlin's Youth Senator. For every youngster the association receives the same daily care-rate as would be paid to an approved Home. But in addition for all the four trades that are taught, a master crasftsman and a journeyman have to be paid. "Kreuzwerk" also has a technical and a pedagogic director, a coordinator for the building sites as well as two social workers and two vocational school teachers. Until the self-built homes are ready for occupation the youngsters live in temporary flats which the association finds and for which it pays the rent. As most of the young people in "Kreuzwerk" have not completed their ordinary schooling the educative side of the project is particularly important.

Many youngsters who have grown up in homes or whose parents are alcoholics who could give them no attention, are in danger of becoming potential reinforcements for the "protesting youth." Not because they have a concrete political reason, not because they are concerned about environmental destruction or the uses of atomic power but quite simply because they want to work off their aggressions. For youngsters of this kind projects such as "Kreuzwerk" are vital.

V. The situation of girls

Whoever speaks about "protesting youth" and "restless youth" thinks first of all, without reflection, of boys and young men. And the idea is not so wrong because it is the males who are mainly involved in rowdiness. But as soon as there are demonstrations against environmental destruction or marches for peace the picture changes. Girls and young women are just as visible as young men.

Just the same the question remains. How do girls live actually in the Federal Republic of Germany? Have they got different problems from those of their male contemporaries.?

The women's magazine, "Brigitte" carried out a large-scale investigation together with the German Youth Institute in the 1981/82 winter in Munich under the title "Girl '82." In September, 1982 the study was presented to the public. The researchers had interviewed 1,148 German-speaking girls aged between 15 and 19 living in the Federal Republic of Germany. Foreign girls and girls living in homes were not included in this poll.

The questioners from the German Youth Institute had a surprise. It was not the family and motherhood that were the dreams of the future for girls between 15 and 19 but their vocation. For 64 per cent of all those questioned - and they had been selected as representative - their main concern was to get the job they wanted. As the investigation report stated: "The aim of vocational training is taken for granted by girls today and the importance placed on their own, independent achievement is stronger than it was in their mothers' day. They assert their right to education and training and in this they have the good will - and in some cases the support too - of their parents, especially their mothers. The girls make their plans for a vocation as a permanent feature of their lives."

Fifty-eight per cent of the girls questioned see their job quite simply as an essential condition of being able to stand on their own feet. Thirty-five per cent dream of "self-development." Most girls see quite clearly that a good school education is the best capital for vocational training. Their standard of education is often better than their parents.' Sixty-seven per cent of the girls attend schools of further education. In the case of their mothers it was 29 per cent and their fathers 39 per cent. Yet despite this good level of education young women have a worse chance on the labour market than their male counterparts.

The girls are fully aware of this disadvantage. And 31 per cent of those questioned by the German Youth Institute fear they will not find a job while 43 per cent fear they will not find the kind of job that they want. Their concern is justified for, as the Federal Office for Labour in Nuremberg found out in 1980, boys leaving basic schools have better chances of finding jobs than girls leaving a seconday modern school.

Only 10 per cent of the girls questioned said they did not want to marry at all. Most of the young women are not happy about the traditional idea that bringing up children is the business of women only. Forty-one per cent expect from their future partners more cooperation in running the home and a

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quarter hoped that their future partners would take more responsibility for bringing up the children than their own fathers had. The traditional equation Man-job, Woman-family is no longer accepted by most girls. They experience in their own families that father and brother keep their distance from housework even when the mother has an outside job herself. The double burden of a job and keeping the home going is still today in the Federal Republic placed on the shoulders of the woman. But today's girls have no intention of taking this pattern over for the future.

The authors of the study sum up: "Today's 15-19 year old girls plan their lives but whether they will attain their ends is doubtful. Help and support for a solution of the conflict between family and job are not likelt to be forthcoming; The existing structure of the labour market and the family are against it."

The report of the commission of enquiry "Youth protest in the democratic state" is just as gloomy about the vocational prospects for girls. It says: "Data from the last structural analysis of registered unemployed shows that the risk of unemployment is higher for girls and young women than for men of the same age. It is still true today as in the past that, in relation to the number of women at work compared with men unemployment among women is above average." Sixty-one per cent of all who applied but were not accepted for vocational training places in 1981 were girls. The enquiry commission demanded that new vocational openings be made for girls and women. The authors of the report wrote: "In order to open new training opportunities for girls outside the traditional range of occupations for women, instruction in the choice of vocation should be expanded and the possibilities for doing practical work in the trade and technical field enlarged. As the increase in the number of girls among those being trained is almost exclusively due to publicity work and promotion activities by the state, especially to the prototype programme of the Federal Minister for Education and Science for the training of girls in trade and technical vocations, these activities should be expanded and continued by the Laender (States) and local authorities."

The commission also thought it necessary, within the framework of the Youth Help programme and further education, to try out educational opportunities for girls and young women more closely adapted to women's particular problems in life.

There are still too many girls in the Federal Republic of Germany with their eyes fixed on too few vocations that require special training. In the case of men 26 per cent of all trainees are found in the five most popular trained vocations whereas with women the figure is 38 per cent. The most popular trained vocations with girls are: salesgirl, hairdresser, sales assistant in the food and drink branch, office worker, commercial business clerk and doctor's assistant. The wages of saleswomen in the first year are about 525 DM and in the second year 577 DM.

They hope for vocational training, they consider how they can later manage to keep on their job and bring up a family - girls in the Federal Republic would not regard themselves at all as members of the "no future" generation. Such negative attitudes do not emerge from the "Brigitte" investigation. Only two per cent of those questioned regard a commitment to some cause or other as pointless. Forty per cent, on the other hand, say that commitment is what makes life worthwhile. The peace movement is for girls the most important movement in social policy. Thirty percent are in favour of it, 28 per cent are interested in it, 13 per cent count themselves as belonging to it and nine per cent would like to join. Only 10 per cent are uninterested in this movement while seven per cent reject it. The Alternative and Green movement also has the sympathy of girls; 22 per cent would like to belong though only six per cent actually do.

Extremes in whatever political direction apparently enjoy little sympathy with girls. Sixty four per cent of the girls questioned in the "Brigitte" investigation reject Communist groups while 78 per cent said they were against Neo-nazis. But nor had the girls very much sympathy with the women's movement. Just three per cent belong to it while four per cent would like to join. Sixteen per cent would like to know more about it and 32 per cent find the women's movement "interesting" without wanting to become involved in theory or practice.

The authors of the study found the most interesting thing was that girls are so strongly committed to the peace movement. One reason for their courage in making a commitment for peace is to be found in the higher level of education of girls, the researchers thought. "Better education means that they are better informed about social conditions and have more time to think about and discuss the social environment," they said.

One of the most important facts learnt from the "Brigitte" study is that girls have no aggressive attitude towards adults - but neither do they have very much confidence in their elders. Sixty nine per cent of girls believe that most adults have no idea at all of what young people are actually thinking. And 80 per cent - the overwhelming majority - believe that if young people want to change anything they will have to take it in their own hands.

These findings point not so much to a young generation overladen with protest as to one that is very independent in the way it thinks.

VI. Alternative ways of life

"Concrete is a Killer." These words are scrawled on the wall of a house in Frankfurt-on-Main. They express the feelings of many young people. They have the feeling that nature all around them is being buried under concrete. And they do not want to be party to it - they are searching for alternative ways of life. In the Federal Republic of Germany the term "Alternative movement" has established itself. It comprises a wide field: Self-help organisations in the social field, living communes, land communes who cultivate their gardens on biological-dynamic lines, and natural food shops. They all belong to the Alternative scene, whose supporters have one thing in common - refusal to think in terms of consumption. And most Alternatives long for another way of life which also attracts many youngsters - an existence "free from pressures."

As varied and colourful as the Alternative movement is, it is often misunderstood by the public. As early as October, 1981, the party of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU) in the Berlin House of Representatives tabled a question for the Senate. Among other things the representatives wanted to know

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"How does the Senate regard the activities of the Self-help groups in Berlin (West), especially the alternative ways of life and obtaining a livelihood as well as the autonomous cultural work?" With this question the politicians' aim was to "continue the dialogue with an important section of our society in parliament." In its answer the Senate said: "The majority in the Alternative movement rejects force and is trying to make a reality of new forms of living and working, to create living conditions that are more natural in an industrial society that is often anonymous. The Alternative movement - unlike the student protest movement of the Sixties - no longer has the aim of changing society from top to bottom. It is endeavouring instead to improve living conditions in small ways and especially to make them more human." The Senate showed itself ready to grant help for the Self-help.

In the meantime over 1,000 alternative projects have grown up in Berlin (West) alone, among them Bio-shops and repair workshops. And more than 700 Alternative farmers are using biological methods to plant their fields without resorting to artificial fertiliser. The "joint-living communities" which were eyed so suspiciously by the public at first, are now to be found in every town. An upper district court in Hamm has even given a judgement favourable to one of these communes. "Joint living communities," the court ruled, should not be treated any differently from other tenants. The court heard a complaint by a living community of students in Bielefeld which was being charged three Marks a square metre more rent than other tenants. The landlord sought to justify the extra rent on the grounds that the students were not leading a customary form of life. With its judgement establishing a principle the court said charging extra rent for "unusual forms of living" was illegal.

An atmosphere of mutual hostility was dissipated likewise in March of this year at a unique conference with the theme "Possibilities of self-administered firms in the campaign against unemployment." The Workers' Self-help (ASH), an Alternative firm, in which 28 young people work on their own responsibility, organised a meeting on behalf of the European Commission and in collaboration with the DGB Federal

Youth school, at which representatives of Alternative projects and officials from authorities and Ministries got to know each other. The young people do not want to "drop out " as the "Frankfurter Rundschau" put it, but simply to switch to a more meaningful activity. How the European Commission can help by giving support should be shown at a series of 20 similar conferences being held in nine countries. The meeting at Oberursel has already accomplished one thing by removing the fears that both the officials and the young people from the alternative movement had about contact with each other. This is also part of the new dialogue between the generations.

Why the alternative movement is so attractive to young people is answered by the authors of the Shell study "Youth '81" who said: "Boys and girls both are opposed to fixed expectations and are prepared to try out what is new and unconventional."

(IN-Press)

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VIII. Addresses

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